2020

Curriculum and Essential Learning

In 2020, the work on Essential Learning\[1\](Aprendizagens Essenciais - AE) for all subjects of the socio-cultural component and the scientific component of Vocational Courses (Cursos Profissionais - PC) continues, while the AE of the subjects for the scientific component disciplines of upper-secondary Specialised Artistic Courses (Cursos Artísticos Especializados - CAE) is also being developed.

For more information on this subject, see content for previous years below.

Learning Communities Project INCLUD-ED

The [INCLUD-ED][2] project enjoys technical support from CREA (Community of Research on Excellence for All), which began training a group of 40 trainers, as well as monitoring and training the teams responsible for implementing the project in each of the educational communities involved in November 2019.

For more information on this subject, see content for previous years below.

Curricular flexibility and autonomy

As part of Curricular Flexibility and Autonomy\[3\] (AFC), each of the five regional monitoring teams held regional meetings with the schools in their regions in November and December 2019. In addition to this, these teams carried out several supervisory visits to schools, at the school’s request or the teams' initiative, as well as clarification meetings regarding the preparation of Innovation Plans for the 2020/2021 school year.

Between December 2019 and February 2020, there was intensive monitoring of public, private and cooperative educational establishments, including vocational schools, public and private, which, in line with Ordinance no. 181/2019 of 11th June, presented Innovation Plans assuming management of over 25% of the total workload (basic curricula).

By February 2020, a total of 80 curricular and pedagogical innovation plans were approved.

For more information on this subject, see content for previous years below.

Inclusive education

[Law no. 116/2019][4], of 13th September, makes the first amendment to [Decree-Law no. 54/2018][5], of 6th July, which establishes the legal framework for inclusive education, consolidating the powers of
schools and multidisciplinary teams to support inclusive education in defining and implementing measures to support learning and inclusion.

The following occurred in January 2020 as part of the monitoring and supervision foreseen in this legislation:

- multidisciplinary technical teams organised thematic workshops in school clusters and non-grouped schools designed specifically for head teachers and coordinators of the multidisciplinary teams supporting inclusive education (see Article 12 of Decree-Law no. 54/2018, of 6th July), involving approximately 1,600 participants.
- implementation of an e-questionnaire for education and teaching establishments on support for learning and inclusion.

**Valuing the teaching career**

As part of the legal framework of inclusive education, two train-the-trainer courses are planned for 2020: (i) "The Role of the Multidisciplinary Support Team for Inclusive Education in creating an inclusive school" (workshop) and (ii) "The special education teacher in successful inclusive education" (course).

In February 2020, the "Technologies for Inclusion and Accessibility" seminar took place, with the participation of approximately 250 teachers and national experts as speakers; a MOOC (Massive Open Online Course) on the same theme is also planned.

**Monitoring group for the pilot project to offer Mandarin as a foreign language on the Upper-Secondary Education syllabus**

This project has been implemented in 13 public schools and extended to vocational courses ([Dispatch no. 7728/2019](#)). As such, four new schools have joined the nine schools already involved in the project in the previous school year, reaching 420 students.

As part of the monitoring process for these pilot schools, an *Information and Sharing Meeting* was held with the schools, representatives of the Pilot-project monitoring group and other ME departments.

**Mathematics Working Group**

With the publication of the 2018 PISA results, the Mathematics Working Group aims to include the study of the Republic of Estonia’s mathematics programme, adding this to the other cases analysed in the first version of the report - USA, Finland and Singapore.

For more information on this subject, see content for previous years below.

**2019**

**«RISE – Roma Inclusive School Experiences» Programme**

The [International RISE Project](#) involves three countries (Portugal, Italy, Slovenia) and is funded by the European Commission's Rights, Equality and Citizenship programme.

Implemented in pre-school, primary and secondary education, RISE has reduced absenteeism and school failure among Roma students, based on cooperation between families and school,
interculturality and dialogue, teacher training and curriculum coordination.

Developed using the action-research method, this programme examines settings and processes that foster structural dependence, developing intercultural practices and pedagogical tools that aim to connect students’ experiential knowledge with the mainstream curriculum, creating pedagogical practices that promote “cultural bilingualism” and, consequently, school success.

Portugal is involved in this Project, which aims to implement an innovative strategy for integrating all Roma children (including migrants or refugees) at school.

On 19th November 2019, the 3rd National RISE Conference was held to report on project developments and the results achieved.

**Learning communities project INCLUD-ED**

The Learning Communities Project [INCLUD-ED](#) aims to transform schools and their communities through the implementation of Successful Educational Activities (Ações Educativas de Sucesso - AES), which favour community interaction and participation to overcome social inequalities.

The project enjoys technical support from CREA (Community of Research on Excellence for All), which in November 2019 began training a group of 40 trainers and monitoring and training the teams responsible for implementing the project in each of the educational communities involved.

The Programme involves creating interactive groups in the classroom and exploring students’ different learning capacities to foster mutual help.

It also includes gatherings, where teachers organise debate among students about classic literature or other arts, community participation, including within the classroom, the training of teachers and students' families, as well as a model of conflict prevention and resolution.

Includ-Ed was initially tried two years ago in 10 school clusters in the country, leading to improvements in educational outcomes and a reduction in dropout and failure rates.

In the 2019/2020 academic year, it was extended to another 50 Priority Intervention Educational Area clusters, where most students come from low-income and poorly educated families, and where schools find dropout rates and the perpetuation of inequalities more difficult to counter.

The programme demonstrates that students from disadvantaged groups, from families with poor education, as well as children of immigrants or whose mother tongue is not Portuguese, can also do well academically, when there is greater family involvement in school.

For more information on this subject, see content for previous years below.

**Class size reduction in secondary education classes**

From the 2019/2020 academic year onwards, Legislative Order no. 16/2019, no. 1, Article 6 established that:

- the maximum number of students per class is reduced from 30 to 28 in year 10, which includes vocational education. This reduction, which was already in place in basic education, will gradually be applied to the remaining grades of upper-secondary education;
- To open, classes in the 10th grade of regular upper-secondary education now will have a minimum of 24 and a maximum number of 28 students, instead of a minimum of 26 and a
Classes in the first year of vocational education will now have between 22 and 28 pupils instead of a minimum of 24 and a maximum of 30. This reduction, which had already been implemented in primary education, will apply to the other upper-secondary education grades.

Pedagogic innovation pilot-project (PPIP)

2019 is the last year that the pedagogic innovation pilot-project [9] (Projeto-piloto de inovação pedagógica - PPIP) is being implemented, with three thematic meetings of the "PIPP Schools Network" held in February, April and May, dedicated to the following themes: "Ways to create assessment criteria"; "Collaborative learning spaces at school: renovation and redesign of classrooms and workspaces for more and better learning" and "From the pedagogical organisation of clusters to the creation and operation of educational teams". These meetings allowed schools to share practices, encouraged an exchange of ideas between the teams involved, and promoted projects in various organisations.

To assess the implementation of the PIPP, an external evaluation study was undertaken by a team from the University of Lisbon’s Institute of Education, which defined four evaluation areas:

(i) The involvement of stakeholders and support mechanisms for school clusters’ participation in the PIPP, namely how the school clusters signed up to the Project, the scope of the measures adopted, the monitoring and follow-up processes triggered and the strategies used to promote participants’ professional development;

(ii) the measures implemented by school clusters regarding curriculum models and management, pedagogical and didactic options, learning and organisational assessment;

(iii) academic results achieved and other effects perceived by participants;

(iv) critical success factors.

The report concluded dropout rates in participating school clusters have fallen to a residual level. There is also a clear upward trend in improved academic results, which is evident in (i) fewer low scores in several subjects, (ii) an increase in average scores per student, (iii) percentage of full success rates (transition without any grade below three) and (iv) academic success rates in final examinations at the end of each cycle.

Experience gleaned from the PIPP demonstrated these clusters’ capacity to implement innovative solutions that reduce dropout levels and school failure. These results were key to Ordinance no. 181/2019, 11th June [10], which establishes the terms and conditions under which schools can design and develop innovation plans that are suitable to their needs and commitments, focussing on specific curricular and pedagogical solutions for all students’ success and inclusion. This Ordinance maps out the procedure for authorising, monitoring and assessing innovation plans. Around 50 innovation projects presented by school clusters/schools have already been approved for the 2019/2020 school year.

Free textbooks for all pupils in public education

Law no. 71/2018, 31st December [11] (2019 State Budget), Article 194, extended free school textbooks to all students attending compulsory education in the state school network at the beginning of the 2019/2020 school year. The same article mentions the definition of the procedures and conditions for free provision, use, return and reuse of school textbooks. Subsequently, Dispatch no. 921/2019, 24th
January [12] approved the "School Textbook Re-use Handbook" which comprises a set of methodologies, good practices and principles/rules to be developed and adapted by the educational community in this process. This is in addition to the existing measure of free textbooks in accessible formats (e.g. Braille; e-book and PDF), which is also extended to students attending private schools.

Curricular flexibility and autonomy

As part of curricular flexibility and autonomy, Ordinance no. 181/2019 [10] defines the terms and conditions that permit public, private and cooperative schools, including vocational schools, to manage over 25% of the curriculum (education and training) in basic and secondary education, thus developing curricular and pedagogical innovation plans. Such autonomy and flexibility are also achieved through sharing responsibility, mobilising educational agents, and empowering administrative and management bodies through systematic monitoring and evaluation mechanisms.

As foreseen in Article 33 of Decree-Law no. 55/2018, 6th July, various measures have been adopted to monitor the work of schools.

Dispatch no. 9726/2018, 17th October, [13] established the monitoring and assessment of the implementation of Decree-Law no. 55/2018, 6th July, undertaken in schools, designating monitoring teams and how they should be set up and operated.

In order to consolidate and implement Decree-Law no. 55/2018, 6th July, national support is assisted locally by five regional monitoring teams (Norte, Centro, Lisboa e Vale do Tejo, Alentejo and Algarve) that have created communities and networks for sharing practices between schools.

Between September 2018 and June 2019, each regional monitoring team held meetings in its region (November/December and April/May), as well as with a small number of schools for the purposes of clarification and sharing of practices.

On 4th June 2019, a national meeting on curriculum autonomy and flexibility was held with schools, teachers, students, specialists and other partners, to disseminate practices, reflect on the work already done and projections for future work.

Curriculum and essential learning

In 2019, Essential Learning [14] (EL) is being developed for socio-cultural and scientific subjects for vocational courses.

In terms of secondary-level specialised artistic courses (Cursos Artísticos Especializados - CAE), the AE for scientific component subjects is also being drawn up, as the AE for general training is the same as the one for science-humanities courses, approved by Order no. 8476-A/2018, 31st August [15].

The curricular organisation of this provision is as follows: AE in vocational courses will be by module and by grade in specialised artistic courses. This AE functions as the basic curricular guidance documents for planning, designing and evaluating student’s learning and aim to develop the skills areas included in the Exit Profile of Students Leaving Compulsory Education [16]. These educational benchmarks are built to develop specific competences of each knowledge area, as well as transversal competences.

National programme for the promotion of school success (PNPSE)

According to the 21st Constitutional Government’s Programme and the Main Options of the
2016-2019 Plan, one of the state’s strategic priorities is successful completion of 12 years of compulsory schooling, focusing on reducing failure at school and early school leaving.

Continuing teacher training has been key in the implementation of Strategic Action Plans. With over 70,000 teachers in continuing teacher training, this is an innovative resource in building educational solutions and knowledge production and sharing.

Training sessions undertaken allowed a transition from continuing training that was focused on teachers’ individual needs to one that meets the needs of the organisation-school that emerged from the collaborative and focussed work done within the school itself and between associated schools.

As part of strategic action plan implementation (2016-2018), over 4,000 continuing teacher training classes were created. These involved a practical component, such as workshops or study circles.

In the light of these national commitments, 2016-2018 outcome indicators for the PNPSE (National programme for the promotion of school success) include reducing retention and dropout rates in the school years covered by PAEKi measures (examples of effective measures can be found in “The Voice of Schools”, Noesis no. 25 [17]) and on the PNPSE website [18] by at least 25%. Another target is reducing the number of pupils with negative grades (in at least one subject) by at least 10% in the 1st, 2nd, 3rd cycles of basic and secondary education between 2014 and 2016.

In basic education schools that have implemented such measures as part of their strategic action plans, retention had dropped by approximately 40% in 2017/18 compared to 2014/15 and by 16% in the number of pupils with at least one negative grade. Comparing the 2014-2016 period with 2016-2018, we can see that the variation rates between them are less than -25% in each cycle of basic education, with a reduction in retention rates in the 1st, 2nd and 3rd cycles, of 29%, 31% and 28% respectively.

For basic and secondary education as a whole, with a drop of around 5% in the school population at these levels of education, 26% fewer pupils are retained and there has been a very significant decrease of 31% in basic education to a relative variation of only -3% in the school population. There have been improvements to educational success, educational equity and significant efficiency gains, as a result of increased internal attainment and the average completion time.

Aesthetic and artistic education programme

Created in 2010, the Aesthetic and Artistic Education Programme [19](Programa de Educação Estética e Artística - PEEA) is integral to an educational policy that values culture and the arts, which is part of the Curricular Organisation of Artistic Education in schools. Organised by the Artistic Education Team, it operates in compliance with Decree-Laws no. 54 (Inclusive Education) and no. 55 (Curriculum), of July 2018, contributing to the acquisition of the skills included in the Exit Profile of Students Leaving Compulsory Education, which considers Aesthetic and Artistic Sensibility to be an important competence.

The PEEA offers a national integrated strategy, regarding different forms of art in a school context. In 2019, it continues to focus on teacher training in artistic education, such as visual arts, dance, music and drama for pre-school and primary teachers, although the aim is to extend it to the remaining cycles of basic and secondary education. In the current school year, several sub-programmes have contributed to systematic work between schools, artists, cultural institutions and local authorities, sometimes through inter-ministerial work, such as artistic residencies (R-A - Residências Artísticas) and education/culture concerts. This participation often involved rehearsals, recitals and shows, as well as exhibitions, identifying culture as something that promotes creativity and free thinking in the
educational process.

**National Arts Plan**

Created by the government’s culture and education departments, the National Arts Plan (PNA – Plano Nacional das Artes) aims to make art more accessible to citizens, particularly children and young people. This is done through the educational community, promoting participation, enjoyment and cultural creation, while using an approach that values inclusion and lifelong learning.

The Plan promotes projects with communities, supporting the development of artistic practices in schools, specific or excluded communities, bringing art and heritage closer to citizens, particularly children and young people.

In the area of Education and Access, it is worth mentioning the School Cultural Project, which has seen the creation of a coordinator’s post in each school cluster/school. This person is responsible for designing a cultural programme suited to the school setting, in partnership with municipalities, artistic bodies and the educational community. The programme is developed bearing in mind the socio-cultural, heritage and artistic diversity of each cluster area. With the Resident Artist Project, interested school clusters/schools can host an artist on their premises. During the academic year, in addition to having a studio at school, the artist will be responsible for supporting the educational community by introducing more artistic processes and practices.

See also [Subchapter 14.5](#). [20]

**National strategy for citizenship education**

The curricular component of Citizenship and Development ensures the implementation of the National Strategy Education for Citizenship (ENEC - Estratégia Nacional de Educação para a Cidadania). Each school approves its citizenship education strategy, defining the areas, themes and learning for each cycle and year of schooling, the way in which the work is organised, the projects undertaken by the students, the partnerships with community bodies, learning assessment and the monitoring and evaluation of the school’s implementation strategy.

The Citizenship and Development curriculum component includes the models of all educational and training provision at all education levels. It is transversal, combining contributions from different subjects and ENEC themes, through the development and implementation of student projects. It is an autonomous subject in the 2nd and 3rd cycles of basic education (5th to 9th year of schooling) and schools decide how to implement this subject in secondary education (grades 10 to 12).

During the 2018/2019 school year, a monitoring mechanism was created for schools by regional teams from the Ministry of Education, and two periods of regional meetings were held. These involved all schools and school clusters in the country, with information collected on the selection of citizenship areas addressed in each school/cluster, the dynamics of constructing the school strategy, highlighting the opportunities and training needs identified by schools.

By the end of 2019, 10 regional meetings were held with coordinators for Citizenship Strategy at School (targeting all schools and clusters).

For more information on this subject, see content for previous years below.
Interoperability between educational and social security services

See Subchapter 14.5. [20]

Consolidating School Social Action and Food Services

In terms of food services, measures were adopted to consolidate and improve service quality, such as:

- Application of Law no. 11/2017, 17th April [21], with a vegetarian option available in all school canteens;
- New regulation for school canteens and menus - Memo no. 3097/DGE/2018 [22], with updating/revision of portions, and a greater focus on nutritional and environmental aspects.

Individual and Home Education

Ordinance no. 69/2019, 26th February [23], regulates types of individual and home education foreseen in subparagraphs b) and c) of no. 1 of Article 8 of Decree-Law no. 55/2018, 6th July [24], defining the rules and procedures relating to enrolment and attendance, as well as the monitoring and certification of learning, taking into account the Exit Profile of Students Leaving Compulsory Education.

A cooperation protocol has been created to organise educational paths, monitor the educational process, as well as the responsibilities of parents’, guardians’ as well as the school where the student is enrolled to foster educational success and ensure compliance with curricular reference frameworks.

Inclusive education

In compliance with Decree-Law no. 54/2018, 6th July [25], several training sessions were organised for teachers, psychologists and other staff, parents/guardians, as well as 150 trainers, who repeated the training until the end of 2018/2019 school year. A MOOC (Massive Open Online Course) was also organised on inclusive education, which took place between February and March 2019, with 3,000 teachers and other staff participating.

The Seminar on Inclusive Education - Equity-Participation-Rights-Values-Progress, which took place in May 2019, provided opportunities to share good practices on inclusive education and a comprehensive debate extended to 700 participants.

Valuing the teaching career

Dispatch no. 779/2019, 18th January [26] aims to define priorities for teachers’ continuing development, so that the training focusses on school success, the curriculum for basic and secondary education, the operationalisation and evaluation of learning, and the legal framework for inclusive education.

Learning communities project (INCLUDE-ED)

In March and June 2019, two INCLUDE-ED School Network seminars took place, involving the 11 clusters that are part of the project. The main objective of these seminars was to develop pedagogical skills through the sharing of practices.

The project is planned to be extended to another 50 school clusters in 2019.
In the INCoDe.2030 [27] (Education) on the INCoDe. 2030, several initiatives were implemented, in order to:

- reflect upon digital skills in continuing and initial teacher training;
- raise awareness in the teaching community regarding the "Impact of Artificial Intelligence on Education (medium/long term)";
- extend ICT curriculum integration in all cycles of compulsory education;
- promote and support the dissemination of programming, robotics and digital literacy;
- develop digital inclusion for special needs in education and in-service training;
- initiate the process of creating digital educational resources for science, Portuguese and mathematics in the 1st cycle of basic education;
- support and prepare the teaching community for the implementation of new curricular guidelines.

Mathematics Working Group

Despite numerous initiatives and measures, retention rates in mathematics are still high.

There is a need for an in-depth analysis that is guided by parameters relevant to the study, such as:

- the history of success rates;
- fluctuations and correlations;
- recovery rates;
- the development of mathematics programmes;
- the effectiveness of support measures over the years and the analysis of practices;
- the Mathematics Action Plan.

Internal and external assessment tools, including international comparisons, particularly with regard to international tests - Trends in International Mathematics and Science Study (TIMSS) and the Programme for International Student Assessment (PISA), became urgent.

Dispatch no. 12530/2018, 28th December, [28] set up the Mathematics Working Group, which was designed to analyse failure, in order to prepare a set of recommendations regarding subject teaching.

As part of its mission, and following the presentation of the Recommendations for Improving Pupils' Learning in Mathematics report (subject to public consultation from 12th July to 31st October 2019), the Mathematics Working Group (Grupo de Trabalho de Matemática - GTM) invited professional associations and different scientific societies from the sector to participate, as well as representatives of NGOs with knowledge and project experience in the field of mathematics and mathematics education. The GTM also organised six sessions in schools throughout the country, in order to listen to opinions and suggestions.

Specialised Artistic Education - Dance, Music, Visual Arts and Audio-visual

For the 2018/2019 and 2019/2020 school years, measures were implemented that led to an increase in the number of students attending Specialised Artistic Education courses and better-quality provision, resulting in legal regulations that foster improved flexibility of the respective syllabi, as well as the implementation of new funding rules.

In pedagogical terms, the publication of new syllabi (Ordinance 223-A/2018, 3rd August, [29])

In terms of funding, the publication of Ordinance no. 140/2018, 16th May [32] ensured that sponsorship contracts correspond to and accompany all Specialised Artistic Education cycles, guaranteeing starting cycles in all procedures, and giving priority to teaching staff qualifications when it comes to the criteria for assessing applications.

**School Sports**

The 2017/2021 School Sports Programme provides continuity to the guidelines of various projects, improving students' physical health, in line with the World Health Organisation’s recommendations. In the 2018/2019 school year, School Sports was allocated an extra 200 teaching credits, achieving 22,400 teaching credits allocated for this purpose (still with an estimate of 30 M€/school year).

The School Sports Programme is still the largest multi-annual educational project in Portugal.

**2018**

**Consolidating School Social Action and Food Services**

Measures were taken to consolidate and improve the quality of food services, such as:

- Providing meals during Christmas and Easter breaks at all state schools;
- Availability of lactose-free and vegetable-based milk as an alternative to milk (5% of stock) in pre-school education and 1st cycle of basic education;
- Extension of free fruit programme to pre-school education (previously only applied to the 1st cycle of basic education);
- Implementation of the Integrated Quality and Quantity Control of School Meals Plan (with special focus on the 750 contracted canteens, but with measures that also include directly managed canteens), through the creation of regional inspection teams, close monitoring of school boards and school reports on compliance with regulatory and contractual duties, if applicable (165,000 test meals).

As part of improved school social action, measures regarding meals and food support are supported by the increased funds in the State Budget for 2018 (€260 M), an increase of €8.5 M in relation to 2017, which also allowed for:

- the creation of a 3rd level of school social action;
- the granting of study visits for socio-economically disadvantaged pupils by advancing the funds needed for schools to ensure the effectiveness of this support.

**Stability and Status of Education Professionals**

Considering the stability and status of the teaching career as a key aspect of quality education and social recognition of schools themselves, in 2018 Portugal consolidated policies that improved working conditions for teaching and non-teaching staff in state schools.

These included:

- Extraordinary recruitment of permanent teaching staff, which included over 3,500 teachers in
2017 and an identical number in 2018;
- Special legislation (limits set by law) reducing the number of years required to sign a contract of indefinite duration - from 2018 onwards, 3 successive contracts/2 renewals. In 2016, 5 successive contracts/4 renewals were required;
- Regularization of music and dance teachers’ professional situation: an unprecedented recruitment and selection scheme based on special legislation setting limits and guaranteeing career stability;
- Portuguese Sign Language Recruitment Group: inclusion of specialised staff who taught a full year, full time, during the 2018/2019 academic year, in this new Recruitment Group, providing professional stability and correcting an unjustified employment inequality;
- Unfreezing of the teaching career - ending the career freeze between 2011 and 2017, allowing progression of approximately 46,000 teachers during 2018;
- Continuous training: during the 2018/2019 academic year, 35,000 teachers and educational agents are expected to participate in continuous training courses (estimated cost of 15 M €/HCOP);
- Extraordinary Regularization of Precarious Work in Public Administration Programme (PREVPAP): procedures for the recruitment of thousands of non-teaching staff who had temporary contracts;
- Unfreezing of non-teaching careers - the general rules for unfreezing of public administration careers have been applied to all operational staff, technical staff, specialized staff and other professionals in the education system;
- Non-Teaching Staff Training Plan: training sessions will be organised for this staff during the first term of the 2018/2019 academic year, in schools in the interior of the country;
- Operational staff: recruitment of 2,000 additional operational staff during 2017 and 2018, due to the alteration of the Ordinance (14th September 2017) that defines the ratios of these personnel.

School Sports

The 2017/2021 School Sport Program redefined the guidelines for these projects, guaranteeing the improvement of students' physical literacy, in line with the World Health Organization’s recommendations. After the 2017/2018 academic year, there was an annual increase of 400 teaching periods attributed to school sports, reaching 22 200 teaching periods attributed to this purpose (+ €30 M/school year).

The School Sports Program is the largest national multi-year educational project.

Free textbooks for all pupils

For the 2019/2020 academic year, free school textbooks are expected to be extended to all cycles of basic and secondary education without jeopardising schools' freedom to adopt textbooks in accordance with the provisions of Law no. 47/2006, 28th August, with the wording of Law no. 72/2017, 16th August, which defines the evaluation, certification and adoption system for school textbooks in basic and secondary education.

Curricular flexibility and autonomy

Following analysis and public discussion in 2016 and 2017, including a teacher survey on the curriculum, conferences and meetings involving experts, teachers and students, as well as participation in the OECD’s Education 2030 project and the drafting, public consultation and publication of the Exit Profile of Students Leaving Compulsory Education, the pilot project was undertaken during the 2017/18 academic year in 302 public and private schools in the different regions to experiment with a new, more up-to-date and inclusive curriculum framework that ensured
greater autonomy and flexibility in curriculum management.

This project was monitored by various education administration bodies, Portuguese experts and a team of specialists from the OECD and was the basis for the publication of Decree-Law no. 55/2018 [33], on 6th July, 2018, which establishes the basic and upper-secondary education curriculum, as well as the guiding principles of its creation, implementation and assessment of the learning.

At the same time, a curriculum revision and redesign was undertaken with education experts and teachers' associations, identifying Essential Learning to be carried out in each subject and year of schooling within a context of autonomy and flexibility. These documents were tested in the pilot project schools, with teachers giving very positive feedback.

Schools, in dialogue with students, families and community, are now able:

i) To have greater flexibility in curriculum management to encourage interdisciplinary work, in order to extend, consolidate and enrich Essential Learning;

ii) To implement the Citizenship and Development component in the different educational and training provision to promote active citizenship, democratic participation within intercultural contexts of sharing and collaboration, as well as the exchange of ideas on current issues;

iii) To encourage students to develop skills regarding research, evaluation, reflection, critical and autonomous mobilisation of information to solve problems and boost their self-esteem and well-being;

iv) To adopt different ways of organising school via the creation of educational teams that capitalise on teaching work and focus it on students;

v) To invest in project work and in the development of oral, written, visual and multimodal communication and expression, valuing the role of students as authors, providing them with meaningful learning situations;

vi) To consolidate learning assessment by focussing on the diversity of tools that provide a better understanding of the effectiveness of work done and support at the first sign of student difficulty in learning;

vii) To provide students in upper-secondary education the chance of adopting their own training pathway through the exchange and substitution of subjects regarding the specific and scientific components of each course.

Inclusive education

Based on the work undertaken by the Inter-ministerial Working Group on Inclusive Education in 2016 and 2017, and incorporating the results of the subsequent public and institutional consultation processes, Decree-Law 54/2018 [5] was published, which establishes the principles and norms that guarantee educational inclusion via greater participation in the learning processes and the educational community.

This legislation introduces an important change in this area, identifying measures that support learning and inclusion, specific curriculum areas, as well as specific resources to be mobilized to meet the educational needs of each and every child and young person throughout their schooling in the different areas of educational and training provision.
An approach based on clinical classifications is thus rejected, helping to create conditions in which measures in the different models - universal, selective and additional – can be taken by each school, within the scope of its autonomy, that are geared towards the inclusion of each of its students.

A technical guide has been published and meetings with all school boards are ongoing, as well as training for teachers and other staff, to ensure proper implementation of these new guidelines from the 2018/2019 academic year onwards.

**Free textbooks for all pupils from the 1st to the 6th grade**

Extending the programme already started in the previous year in the first cycle, the proposal to provide free textbooks for all students in the 1st and 2nd cycles of basic education in 2018/19 (a total of around 500,000 students) was approved. This measure adheres to the constitutional principle of free education, as well as quality of learning and equal opportunities, ensuring all students benefit from a key aspect of school success.

In addition to this, an electronic platform to facilitate this process of free textbooks was created, providing more efficient coordination between schools, families and points of sale.

**Pedagogic innovation pilot-project**

Since November 2017, as part of the monitoring of the Pedagogic Innovation Pilot-Project (PIPP) follow-up visits were made by the Ministry of Education to each school cluster. Additionally, the Network Meetings continued to involve all school clusters of the pilot project.

Between November 2017 and March 2018, three meetings of the PPIP School Network were held to share experiences and continue reflection on the promotion of pedagogical innovation in schools, identifying critical aspects of success related to the measures that have been implemented and ways of dealing with them, to promote sharing, reflection and discussion in order to draw conclusions from the process experienced and to define future steps.

In December 2017, this project was extended to another school, the Silves Sul School Cluster, and some proposed measures are already being implemented.

**Learning communities project (INCLUD-ED)**

In January 2018, external evaluation of the project began with the data collection before the start of project implementation.

Since November 2017, training sessions have been held through a process of teacher self-training, based on the training modules provided.

The school clusters that chose to become Learning Communities developed the various stages of transformation and began to implement successful educational initiatives. The ones that chose to only implement successful educational initiatives (interactive groups, dialogical literary gathering, dialogical teacher training, dialogic model of conflict prevention, participation of the educational community and/or family members training) have started them.

In addition to the Facebook [34] account dedicated to the project, launched during the initial teacher education (ITE) training session in July 2017 for dissemination and sharing, another webpage was created in February 2018 on the DGE website [35] to provide information and documentation.
Within INCoDe.2030, the following flagship policies have been established: in **Action Area 2**, Education,

- Development of digital educational resources: design, development and dissemination of digital educational resources for different levels of education, subjects, curricular and training components, promoting innovative educational environments. The development of digital resources and a web platform for 1st-cycle teachers and students in the areas of experimental sciences, mathematics and Portuguese are currently underway;
- Training of pre-school, primary and secondary education teachers: training programme for primary and secondary school teachers, with the participation of the School Associations Training Centres (CFAE) and higher education institutions;
- Extension and further development of the ICT curriculum;
- Design and implementation of the subject Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) from the 5th to the 9th year, which is currently being piloted as part of the pedagogical flexibility and autonomy project;
- Design of a ICT reference framework for 1st-cycle students.

**National strategy for citizenship education**

Following the implementation of the National Citizenship Education Strategy (ENEC), in conjunction with the development of the Curricular Flexibility and Autonomy Project (PAFC), there is a MOOC (Massive Open Online Course), which aims to support the teachers of PAFC schools, in a consistent process of changing pedagogical practices.

In Module 6 of this course, whose theme is Citizenship and Development, the key ideas of the National Strategy for Citizenship Education (2017) are presented, as are the practical impact on school activity and the organisation of pedagogical and didactic activities, relating them with the day-to-day challenges in students' lives or with the community that the school is part of. Driven by this context, the school faces various questions whose response must translate the vision advocated in the Exit Profile of Students Leaving Compulsory Education.

This course runs from 22nd January to 30th April, 2018, with 3,460 students enrolled, of whom 1,059 are actively participating.

**Curricular flexibility and autonomy**

As part of the Curricular Flexibility and Autonomy Project (PAFC) created by Dispatch no. 5908/2017, 5th July, a supervision and monitoring process for implementation and development is being developed through a simple and non-bureaucratic model, whose main aims are:

- To promote autonomy based on trusting each school and its responsibility inherent to providing quality public education;
- To support schools in the implementation and development of the project, while respecting their autonomy;
- To promote reflection and shared practice;
- To promote networking between schools.

Between November 2017 and March 2018 there was one national meeting, 7 regional meetings, 34 network meetings and 170 visits to schools. In addition to this, schools benefit from distance support, via e-mail and Moodle. A database was also created to gather information from schools and training
was provided via workshops, Massive Open Online Course (MOOC) and Webinars.

On 9th February 2018, the National Meeting on Curricular Flexibility and Autonomy was held for all public and private schools, and other bodies, to present an initial review of the PAFC and data resulting from the OECD’s mid-term evaluation, as well as multiple perspectives on this project, namely from national coordination authority, schools, PAFC consultants, external bodies and students. This meeting was attended by 750 people.

As a result of the provisions of point 16 of Dispatch no. 5908/2017, 5th July [37], an OECD team made up of international experts visited Portugal. Between 15th and 19th January 2018, this team visited participating schools with the aim of undertaking a mid-term evaluation of the project, in terms of its design, implementation and impact in the educational community. To this end, the team visited 9 PAFC schools, interviewing head teachers, teachers involved in the project, students, parents and school partners. Subsequently, this international team met with members of the PAFC’s national coordination team, the technical team and regional team coordinators.

There were also interviews held with PAFC consultants and bodies external to the project, such as those with the Private and Cooperative Education Establishments Association, the National Public School Cluster Heads Association, the Scientific and Pedagogical Council of Continuing Education, the National Education Council, the School Council, the Refugee Support Platform and the Portuguese Mathematical Society.

**Curriculum working group (essential learning)**

In August 2017, Essential Learning (EL) for the first years of schooling of every education cycle was published. In the 2017/2018 academic year, EL was implemented in the classes of schools that have been part of the Curricular Flexibility and Autonomy Project (PAFC) [3].

During the pilot project monitoring process, a survey on Essential Learning was used to:

- assess teachers' perception regarding the identification in the EL content of what is essential for all students to learn in relation to what is established in other curricular documents in use;
- assess the teachers' perception regarding the coordination of EL with the development of the Student’s Profile;
- check the readability of the EL as a basic curriculum reference document (in terms of structure, organisation and layout);
- understanding whether the drafting of EL facilitates: (1) interdisciplinary planning; (2) pedagogical differentiation; (3) the use of active methodologies.

The data collected from 219 units underlined the essential aspects of learning in the educational process. For example:

- 83% of the respondents considered that the structure, organisation and layout of the EL document facilitate or greatly facilitate curricular planning;
- 77% considered that the drafting of EL facilitates or greatly facilitates coordination between different curriculum components;
- 84% considered that EL are objective or very objective in relation to knowledge development.

In January 2018, a meeting was held with all teachers associations involved defining the EL to review the work in progress.

Currently, the EL are being completed for all grades and levels of education of every subject that is part of curricula (from early childhood education to the 12th year of schooling).
Follow-up group of the pilot project offering Mandarin as a foreign language on secondary education curriculum

In the 2017/2018 academic year, the Ministry of Education continued with the pilot project for providing Mandarin as a foreign language in the same 12 schools of the public network that had already been involved with this initiative the previous year. The number of students rose to 361, which demonstrates the interest in this foreign language and culture. The schools involved were closely monitored, ensuring the training of the 11 Chinese teachers to teach this subject.

After analysing the evaluation, via external summative assessment tests, students confirmed the positive ratings they had achieved in the internal assessment.

National programme for the promotion of school success

At the end of the first year, the Mission Structure drafted a report presenting the results obtained in 2016-2017 and final conclusions. In addition presenting statistical information, the aim is to reflect upon the work done during the 2016-2017 academic year, considering the results already achieved. As part of the monitoring process, over half of the groups implemented between 80% and 100% of the measures foreseen in their strategic action plans, demonstrating schools’ major involvement in promoting educational attainment.

On the PNPSE platform, support and monitoring tools were made available to schools, such as:

1. A link for monitoring the 2016-2017 school results to allow data collection, for the calculation of retention rates by year, of the percentage of successful students, as well as of the quality of learning in Portuguese during the first two years of basic education, by collecting the good and very good classifications.
2. A forecast simulator for PNPSE retention and dropout rate as a self-regulation tool, based on data exported by schools to MISI (DGEEC).

To this end, each school can check retention rates for the 2014-2016 and 2016-2017 school years and the respective projection for the current 2017-2018 academic year, taking into account the commitment to a 25% reduction in the 2016-18 period.

Regarding retention and dropout rates, there was a drop in 2016/17 when compared to the past records of schools covered by the PNPSE.

In the 2017/2018 academic year, the Mission Structure continues to monitor schools, promoting reflection and sharing of good practices.

Equally, added emphasis is given to developing local strategies to promote educational attainment, for example, by organising meetings targeting municipal educational services, the resources used in municipal applications and school and CFAE management, as well as the supervision and monitoring of measures of Municipal Integrated Plans built on coordination and complementarity with the schools’ strategic action plans.

Additional information available at: 12.3 Support Measures for Learners in Early Childhood and School Education.

Exit Profile of Students Leaving Compulsory Education

The Student Profile, approved by Dispatch no. 6478/2017, 26th July, sets out the results expected
of young people when they finish compulsory schooling. To this end, the commitment of all stakeholders involved is crucial, from the school and of all those working within it, families and guardians, policy makers and society in general. In this sense, national initiatives have been developed to promote the ownership of this document by all those who, in one way or another, are involved in the education of Portuguese young people and a reflection focused on specific solutions involving the organisation of school and education geared towards achieving this Profile.

Among these, Student Profile Day stands out, which was held on 15th January, 2018 and revolved around two simultaneous, interconnected events, with the same focus, which allowed for different contributions:

- a national conference involving various individuals from different sectors of society, and
- local conferences in schools, involving all educational actors and organised around several parallel activities.

During this event, the Student Profile brochure was launched and disseminated, at the same time it was made available on the DGE website.

To support the participants, a web page of the event was set up, where, in addition to practical information, several documents were made available to support school activities, such as presentations to promote discussion among teachers and activity guides for students.

323 school clusters or non-clustered schools throughout the country and islands took part in the event. According to the answers to a questionnaire used after the event, most of the participating schools (53.7%) maintained school activities, which took place in parallel with Profile Day activities; 40.6% of teaching institutions partially stopped lessons to do Profile Day activities and 5.7% of schools decided to stop all teaching. In these local initiatives, it was mainly teachers and students involved, as well as teacher librarians, parents and guardians, operational assistants, local councillors, among others. It is also important to mention that most participating schools involved all students, which accounts for the great impact that this initiative had.

In 2018, the Student Profile was published and made physically available to all public and private schools.

Alongside this initiative, and as part of the OECD Future of Education and Skills 2030 project, a workshop was held on 13th December 2017, which was attended by around 25 schools of the OECD School Network. Each school was represented by 2 teachers and 2 students. Once again, the aim of this activity was to give students a voice, using a consultation process about how to implement the abovementioned Exit Profile of Students Leaving Compulsory Education in each educational context. This initiative also involved teachers who, first in interaction with their peers and then, in cooperation with the students, were able to exchange points of view and co-construct reflection and improvement in the teaching and learning process.

Escola 360°

The E-360° system is an electronic platform that aims to facilitate interaction among all those participating in students’ educational process (parents/guardians, teachers, school leaders, administrative staff and educational administration bodies), allowing for greater collaboration and faster and more effective information exchange among the various stakeholders, ensuring security, confidentiality and existence of information in real-time. Its creation was based on the awareness that there were several electronic platforms for different school procedures involving duplication of work and a lack of transparency and communication.
School participatory budget

In order to promote students’ democratic participation, engagement at school and financial literacy at lower (3rd cycle of basic education, 7th to 9th grade) and upper secondary (10th to 12th grade), the government created in 2017 extra funding for schools (1 euro per student) to be applied through a democratic process in which students prepare proposals for using such funding for improvements at their schools. Such proposals require the support of a minimum number of classmates and validation from the school head teacher. Then it is discussed and voted on by all students. The winning proposal will be implemented by the school until the end of the year.

After the success of the first year, with more than 1,000 schools involved (around 93% of public schools with lower and upper secondary), over 4,000 proposals and 46% of students voting, the second edition of this programme will be undertaken in 2018.

Class size reduction

An independent team of experts undertook research in 2016-2017 on the costs and benefits of the government’s goal of reducing class size in different scenarios, producing recommendations for the responsible and successful development of such measure. This study shows the pedagogical benefits, particularly in terms of reducing school failure in basic education and in vulnerable contexts. It recommended the reimplementation of class size limits, which were used between 2004 and 2013: 24 in the 1st cycle of basic education, 24 to 28 in the remaining cycles of basic education, calculating the costs of such measures taken gradually over the next few years. This measure was already implemented in the 2017-2018 academic year, in the Programme for Priority Intervention Educational Areas (around 15% of the public network), and its extension to remaining schools was approved in the State Budget for 2018.

Reinforcement of school social action

In order to promote the principles of inclusion and equal opportunities in the educational system, as well as the main goal of achieving 12 years of schooling for all, since 2015, the government has implemented:

- a system to provide free textbooks for all students in the 1st cycle of basic education (1st to 4th grades);
- expansion of economic support for educational expenses of poor families (school meals, educational facilities, transport);
- boosting human resources for special needs, including psychologists and other specialised professionals;
- a study undertaken by a working group, in order to assess the current policy of full-time school in the 1st cycle of basic education, and to develop some scenarios for an expansion to the 2nd and 3rd cycles.

Valuing the teaching career

In order to value the teaching careers and to promote high-quality teaching practices, since 2015, the government has implemented:

- the replacement of salary cuts and de-freezing of career progression implemented from 2011 to 2016 (same as other civil servants);
- all teachers hired with annual contracts during the last three years given a permanent contract as civil servants (over 3,000 teachers);
• involvement of teachers, systematically through their associations and directly in some initiatives, in defining curriculum policies;
• reduction of class size and of students/teacher ratios.

Revision of public support of private schools

The Portuguese state support private schools in areas where they fulfil public functions, particularly when there are shortcomings in public network. In 2016, the government began providing transparency and rationality in the provision of such support, setting clear criteria and analysing its compliance in each territory and in each school year, in order to improve rationality in the school network, efficiency of public spending and equal opportunities between private agents.

Working group for the study of professional regulations for teaching Portuguese sign language

Order no. 2286/2017, 16th March, created a working group that took the first steps towards identifying and defining the requirements (academic and professional) for the teaching of Portuguese sign language in public schools' network.

This working group includes a representative of the Assistant Secretary of State for Education, who will coordinate the work, as well as representatives of the Secretary of State for Science, Technology and Higher Education, the Secretary of State for Education, the Secretary of State for Inclusion of Persons with Disabilities, of the General-Directorate of School Administration, the General-Directorate of Education and the General-Directorate of the School Establishments.

The working group listened to the representative associations of sign language teaching staff, the respective governing bodies of the Autonomous Regions and the Schools Council, as well as observing the collective negotiation procedures resulting from the General Labour Law in Public Functions. Following the recommendations of the Final Report produced by the working group, Portuguese sign language trainers are now recognized as being part of the teaching profession, through the creation of their respective recruitment group, formalised in Decree-Law no. 16/2018, 7th March (as amended by Decree-Law no. 27/2006, 10th February and Decree-Law no. 79/2014, 14th May, both of which were amended by Decree-Law no. 176/2914, 12th December).

Inter-ministerial working group on inclusive education

Despite the measures that have been adopted, the Portuguese educational system still has low participation levels of students with special educational needs (NEE) in class activities. It is difficult to guarantee the attendance and completion of 12 years of compulsory schooling and to ensure that all students receive a final certificate describing the learning accomplished and the skills developed within national curriculum subjects or other specific curricular areas. The aim is for everyone to achieve the Student Profile, including via alternative learning paths that allow each learner to progress in the curriculum and reach educational success.

In June 2016, eight years after the publication of the legislation defining the specialised support to be provided in pre-school education and public, private and cooperative primary and secondary education, there were already possibilities for improvement regarding a more inclusive school.

A Working Group was set up (Dispatch no. 7617/2016, 8th June) to draft a report proposing amendments to Decree-Law no. 3/2008, 7th January (amended by Law no. 21/2008, 12th May) and respective regulatory framework for the implementation of measures to promote greater educational inclusion of all pupils.
The Inter-Ministerial Working Group on Inclusive Education heard a range of stakeholders, carried out a survey of problems and sought the best solutions from a didactic, pedagogical, health education and social inclusion perspective.

In July 2017, the working group presented a proposal for legislation on inclusive education. This proposal has undergone a public consultation process until 30th September 2017 and was subject to changes due to the contributions received. At this stage, the proposal awaits contributions stemming from consultations required as part of legal procedures.

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